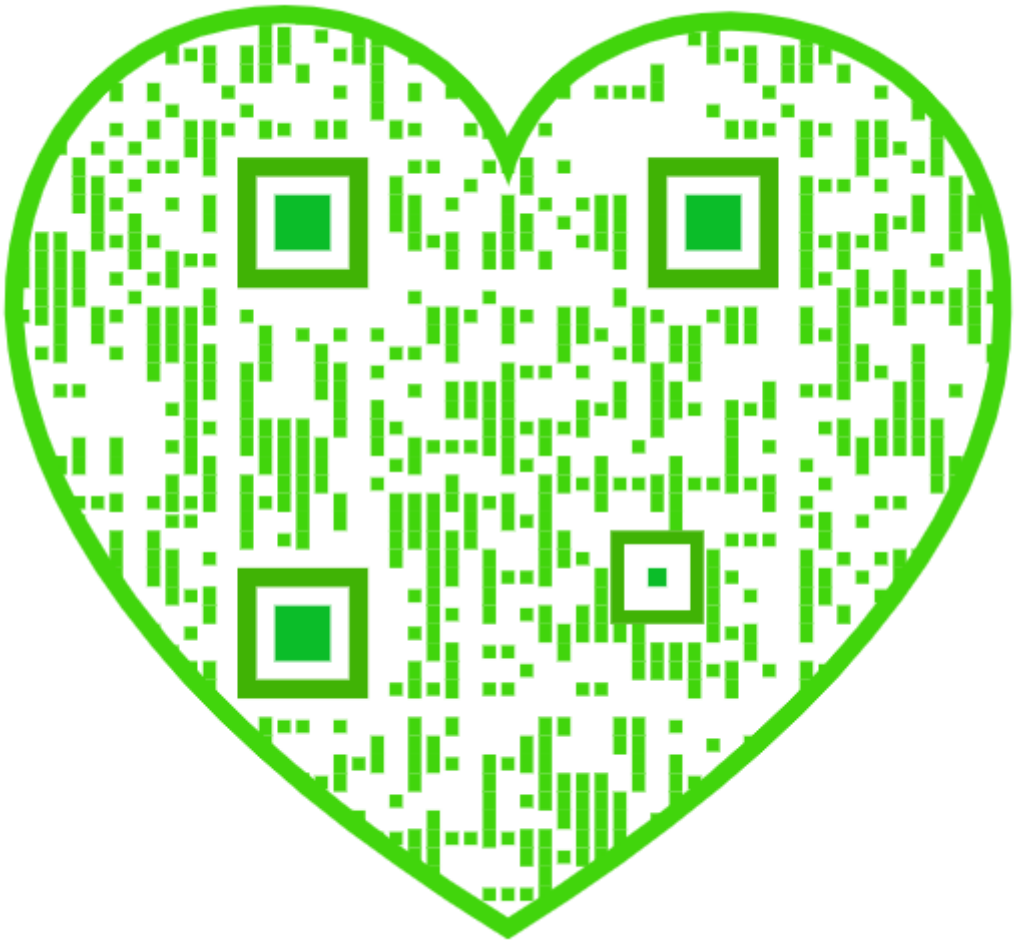

THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI BULLETIN

EDUCATION SERIES

VOLUME I. NUMBER 3.

JOURNALISM FOR TEACHERS

BY

FRANK L. MARTIN,

Assistant Professor of the Theory and Practice of Journalism
University of Missouri

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
COLUMBIA, MISSOURI.
February, 1912

CONTENTS

	Page
Why Teachers Should Know Journalism	1
What Constitutes News	4
Presentation of News	11
Writing the News and Technical Article	16

I.—WHY TEACHERS SHOULD KNOW JOURNALISM.

GENERAL SCHOOL NEWS.

The school is a public institution and the teacher is a public officer. To the teacher are entrusted responsibilities far greater than are left to the average public officer—not the mere business affairs of the people, but the instruction, care and the moral and physical welfare of their children. In return, the teacher owes to the people, particularly the parents of the pupils in his charge, all information relating to the conduct of affairs in his school or special department, as far as this information is of general interest. Such information, *providing*, *always*, *that it is of general interest* to the parents and others in the community, and not of trivial, private or purely technical nature, constitutes news. It is news to which the residents of the community in which the school is maintained, are entitled indisputably.

Few teachers realize the eagerness of the reading public of today in any community, for news of the schools. That interest is vital because such news has to do directly or indirectly, with their children.

Editors of newspapers, generally, try to publish as much of this news as possible but they are, in most instances, handicapped in two ways: first, the number of newsgatherers and writers in their employ prohibits them from spending the time necessary for search and investigation, if the news is to be uncovered and published accurately; second, the limited knowledge of the average teacher as to what constitutes news or as to what information is of general interest and hence should go to the newspapers, prevents him from furnishing the desired information.

One obvious remedy would be for teachers to acquire at least an elementary, working knowledge of journalism. This would enable them to recognize and furnish news to the newspaper representatives, or better yet, to gather and write this news and submit it to the newspapers, themselves.

The publication regularly of news from any school must necessarily result in a closer relationship between that school and its patrons. It tends to arouse a greater interest in matters of education in the community and in the welfare and progress of the school.

EDUCATIONAL JOURNALS.

The many advantages in the interchange of ideas, methods, results of experiments and research work in the teaching profession, as well as any other profession, are widely known. If the educational journals designed to convey this information are to be of real service, then it is essential that the editors and contributors of such journals know the principles of journalism, at least the principles involved in writing and expression. Briefly, such knowledge must include methods in the assembling of facts for presentation; the ability to judge of the relative importance of such facts; ability to interpret and, above all, an ability to write clearly, concisely and understandingly.

The educational publications today, as a whole, are not serving their purpose. They are not being read. Those who are contributing with the worthy view of aiding their fellow teachers, are not presenting their information in a manner that attracts or compels reading. Although the teacher may have information that is of value, he may as well leave it unwritten as to submit it to the average reader without regard to the manner of writing and presentation. In many cases a careful perusal of articles in the educational journals, although intended by the author to reach those of his station in the profession, discloses a need of translation.

SCHOOL PUBLICATIONS.

The news or combined news and literary publications of many schools are issued under the supervision of the teachers. Such publications are an impetus to a school's interests and spirit, if properly edited and managed. It is not enough that they come from the printer grammatically correct, perfect as to English, etc. Again some journalistic knowledge is essential, both as to the nature of the material to be presented and the manner of its presentation. There must be direction or aim in their general make-up, if these school papers and periodicals are to have a hold on the students and accomplish a purpose.

NEWSPAPERS AS AN AID TO TEACHERS.

No citizen in any community is better fitted to become a leader in the affairs of his community than the teacher. The interests of that community are, or should be, as vital to him as to the banker, the merchant or any professional resident. The newspaper offers

him the best possible means of assuming some of the responsibilities of such a leadership, providing he has the ability of expressing his views in writing.

Problems of health, administration of public affairs, public improvements, needs and conditions are some of the questions that every community must settle. Why shouldn't the teacher assume his share of a duty to society by taking part? Through the newspapers, he can point out, suggest and influence by writing articles prepared for that purpose, reaching hundreds where by individual effort he can reach only a few. More and more are the columns of the newspapers being opened for such articles, competently written. Never are they unwelcome by the editor who has the welfare of his community at heart. Newspapers now are reflecting not alone the opinions of the editors, but are inviting the expression of public opinion.

NEWSPAPERS IN THE SCHOOL.

The events of today which make history are of no less importance than similar events of yesterday. Such events are recorded daily and the reading of newspapers and periodicals should be urged by the teacher among his pupils. The papers should be wisely selected both as to character of contents and the manner of presentation.

There are few useful citizens who do not keep in touch with the affairs of his own community and at large. Training for such citizenship should begin in the school room. There is no better method than through the medium of newspapers—the intelligent reading and discussion of events and problems presented by them from day to day. In the selection of newspapers for such study, the teacher can best be guided by a knowledge of journalism.

BETTERING SCHOOL CONDITIONS.

Schools often lack in equipment; physical conditions need remedying and other things are at fault, sometimes, because of a lack of interest and support by the patrons. The teacher has at hand the local newspaper or newspapers, to arouse that lagging interest. Communications, well directed and ably written, pointing out the conditions and the improvements needed will do much in bringing the desired results. Publicity for existing conditions in most instances is all that is needed.

This is a day of newspaper reading. It cannot be denied that news, truthfully and well presented, is more widely read and has

a wider influence than ever before. Not once but many times, perhaps, will it be necessary to call attention to these conditions. The newspapers offer the advantage of placing the same matter before the people day after day, until the constant emphasis has brought response.

II.—WHAT CONSTITUTES NEWS.

FOR NEWSPAPERS.

The writer of a series of articles on journalism recently sought from editors of successful newspapers in various parts of the country, their definition of news. No two definitions obtained were alike, yet all, when analyzed, agreed that "news, in its broadest sense, is that which is of interest to the people—the public."

In considering this, it should be remembered that information of interest to the public is distinct from that which is purely private or personal. Where the line shall be drawn rests with the teacher who is furnishing news of his school to the papers.

It is never possible to prophesy just what news will arise at any time, place or institution, yet in narrowing the field to school news, there are many events of a similar nature in nearly all schools, the details of which will be of interest to the readers in the community. A list of the more important of these is given here, although it may vary as conditions vary:

New courses of study.
Winning of prizes or honors.
Entertainments by pupils.
Debating contests.
Athletic contests.
Attendance.
New methods in teaching.
Experiments by students.
Improvements and added equipment.
Meetings of societies.
Lectures (outside of class room).
Commencement exercises.
Class meetings, activities, etc.
Rules governing discipline, study, etc.
Changes in teaching force.
Teachers' meetings.
Institute meetings
School board meetings.

The foregoing by no means covers the field of school news. There are many additional activities in connection with pupils, teachers and administration which should be productive of inter-

esting material. These the teacher must learn to discern as the reporter learns to recognize the news in the great amount of information that daily comes to him.

The location of the school is one of the determining factors. In small towns or rural communities, the number of readers of the papers which may be supplied with school news is limited. The interests of these readers are centralized. In such places they are interested in the happenings and progress of one school, where in a large city their interests are diffused among many. For instance, a small entertainment in a rural community will be a matter of general interest. In the city it might be of interest only in the district from which the school gets its pupils. In the first case the news article could be worth, perhaps, 300 or 400 words, and in the last case it might be given merely a paragraph. If it is to be of general interest in the city paper, the entertainment must be of such magnitude as to interest the readers of the paper as a whole or, at least, a large portion. City newspapers are better equipped, however, for gathering the news of the schools and the smaller town or communities will be considered chiefly here.

In the gathering of information for a news story (story is the newspaper term applied to all news articles) there are no ironclad rules, but in the reporting of any event there are a few things that should be observed. Before one can hope to write or furnish a clear, comprehensive report, he must have all of the available information at hand. In this the teacher has the advantage of the average newspaper reporter, because he generally has charge of the matter to be reported or, at least, is present and is familiar with conditions. From all of this information he must sift out the unimportant and construct his story from that which he judges to be of general interest.

The teacher must remember that the most interesting reading is about persons. Hence the use of names is absolutely essential. Give the *name and initials* of every person connected in any way with the event. Before writing that name see that it is *accurately spelled*. There is no form of inaccuracy that is more dissatisfying than in the spelling of proper names and in incorrect initials. It is emphasis on details that tends to make the entire report accurate. Since the report has to do chiefly with those connected with his school, the teacher can easily verify all names by consulting his records. Where there is any chance of the reader not knowing, or a chance of confusion with some other person, identify the person named. If a pupil, tell where he lives and give

the name of his parents. If a patron, give his occupation and tell where he lives.

All information should be specific. This means giving information in detail and without conjecture. The time and place should be specifically stated in every instance. Ages, too, are often an essential detail.

That some idea may be obtained of the information which the stories suggested should contain, each is discussed briefly here:

New Courses of Study.—Give a detailed explanation of these courses; why offered; what teacher is to have charge; the teacher's training; length of course; books used, or laboratory work; what other schools are offering them; what students are eligible; ultimate results from the instruction; story particularily applicable at the beginning of the school term.

Winning of Prizes or Honors.—Name of the winner; how won; what is the prize; who gives it and why; how many entered the competition; what was the work of the student; who were the judges and how was decision made; when presented and by whom; has it been offered in former years and who were the former winners? In cases where offered for best essays or debates, give titles and the treatment of subjects. Publicity of such events comes in the nature of a reward to the winner.

Entertainments.—Who gave it; why given (in case of a benefit); names of every person who took part; if a play, give the story and the cast of characters; if a program of recitations, etc., give in detail the part taken by each; attendance; if given by a club, give the purpose of the club and object of entertainment (in case of benefit).

Debating Contests.—Between what schools or classes; who won; subject debated; names of representatives and alternates; summary, at least, of argument of each side; names of judges; how did they vote; former contests between the schools or classes; training for the contest; the leaders of either side; attendance.

Athletic Contests.—Between what schools, departments or classes; who won; the score; how the points were made; the line-up (names of players and their positions on the team); names of officials; review of the entire game; detailed account of the important plays and critical stages, when the contest was in doubt; preparation for the contest; quality of the game (skill displayed individually or by the teams). In reporting any athletic contest it is essential that the teacher know the players and the details of

the game. Without such knowledge, an accurate comprehensive story cannot result.

School Attendance.—Stories available at the beginning of each term; give exact figures showing the attendance in each class or department; compare with former years; give reasons for decrease or increase.

New Methods in Teaching.—Non-technical discussion of any changes or innovations in the manner of instruction in any subject; change of text, laboratory or material used; give reasons; show results expected.

Experiments by Pupils.—Stories available in laboratory or in practical training work; what the pupils are doing or making; under whose supervision; if laboratory experiment, give process, results and practical application; if manual training or work of similar nature give cost, time spent, tools, finished product, etc.

Improvements and Added Equipment.—These stories may include information of building, heating, sanitary improvements, etc.; new books, increased school room supplies, equipment for laboratories, gymnasium, etc.

Meetings of Societies.—Give nature of business transacted or action taken on any matter of general interest; report of speeches, by whom and on what subject; purpose of society and what matters are before it; officers.

Lectures.—Class room lectures are considered of a private nature. Special lectures arranged for the pupils as a whole, often given by outside speakers, should be reported fully. Give at least a brief sketch of the speaker, name, work, life, residence, etc.; include in the report every point touched upon by the speaker, even though in some cases only mere mention is made. Expressing only a few of the speaker's thoughts, where he has touched on many, does not constitute a fair or accurate report. Verify any question in doubt by consultation after the lecture, or by manuscript; if quotations are used, quote accurately, using speaker's own words as far as possible.

Commencement Exercises.—Names of all pupils who receive diplomas; give detailed account of program with names of those who took part, subjects, etc.; names of those who won honors, if any; reports of addresses by visitors; who presented diplomas;

musical program; description of decoration, flowers, presents; what graduates will do after leaving school, etc.

Class Meetings.—Note any action taken on matters of general interest; preparations or plans made for coming activities; election of officers; display of class spirit; discussions; social events arranged.

Changes in Teaching Force.—Name of teacher leaving; how long with the school; his new position; name and sketch of new teacher; where he has taught previously; what classes and subjects he will teach.

Institute Meetings.—These meetings are often productive of stories dealing with school problems, presented by speakers and papers. Many of these subjects are old to teachers but, in some cases, new and of interest to the public. Avoid those discussions that are purely technical.

School Board.—Matters of school administration, including expenditures, hiring of teachers, contemplated improvements, tax levy and similar things are of public interest. In small communities reports of the work of the school board often may be made best by a teacher.

Again attention should be called to the fact that much other material of news value will come to the teacher. Also, it should be known that every news event cannot be accurately or thoroughly reported by making that report answer a given set of questions made out beforehand, such as in the foregoing list. A reporter, for example, may be assigned to obtain the news of a fire. He starts his work with the idea that he is to write of fire damages and losses. Investigation may show that in the excitement of the fire there has been an $800 robbery of a safe in the building, while the actual fire damage has been only $10. His story then becomes a robbery story and the fire news incidental.

This is an extreme case, perhaps, when applied to school news, yet at any event such as a meeting, debate or athletic contest there may arise many unusual things of great interest that cannot be foreseen.

FOR TECHNICAL OR EDUCATIONAL JOURNALS.

The technical journal has two purposes: first, the presentation of school news that a teacher may know what is happening of a general news character in other schools over the state or country;

second, the presentation of school problems or discussions of questions and methods designed to aid the teacher in his work.

News suitable for a technical journal depends much on the circulation of the journal for which it is written. If it is a publication supplying information chiefly to teachers of one state, then the field is fairly broad. The news should deal with teachers and their work, emphasizing the personal side. Teachers of the same state are constantly thrown together through associations and state meetings, and form a wide acquaintance among those in their profession. Thus they learn to depend on the educational papers (the "personal columns" especially) to keep in touch with one another.

In addition to these personals (news items about teachers) there will be material for news in the new courses, changes, general progress, growth, or unusal incidents relative to instruction in your school. In furnishing this information, it should be remembered that all of the readers are teachers who do not live in your community, hence that "comumnity interest" in your particular school or the individual pupils is lacking. Instead, the interest is centered about you as a teacher, what you are doing as a teacher, or about general educational events in your school. As you should place emphasis on names of pupils and patrons in preparing news for the newspapers in your community, so in writing for educational journals emphasize the names of the teachers about whom the news is centered.

In technical papers of wide circulation the personal element is lost almost entirely.The happenings of your school become worthy of news only when they are of interest to teachers as a whole, who may be engaged in work anywhere.

In either class of these journals, the primary and chief purpose to be served, it would seem, is the dissemination of new methods and ideas helpful to the teacher. To serve this purpose the technical journal should carry to its readers such information on education matters that will enable the teachers to keep in touch and apply the best and latest there is in methods of instruction. It should be a forum for educational thought, ideas, theories, practice, suggestions and results. Every teacher should be a student of education and the results of his studies should be contributed to this forum. Those who receive information in this manner are obligated in a way to give in return whatever helpful information they, themselves, have.

Articles of a technical nature may treat of any plan or method, original or otherwise, that you have perfected and put into use,

providing it is not already in general use and generally known. They may deal with any phase of educational work from the heating of a school building or the purifying of drinking water used, to a new method of giving examinations. They may be negative in context, serving as a warning to other teachers not to try methods or practices which you have found a failure after a thorough test.

FOR SCHOOL PAPERS.

The teacher in a high school who may have charge of the publication of a student paper, has the opportunity of making that paper serve a serious purpose: that of promoting the pupils' interests and creating a closer relationship among them. The first aim of such a paper should be to give the news of the school. This work, in itself, gives the pupils training in English, composition, observation and the obtaining of accurate information. As many are now issued, presenting columns of notes about trivial affairs, humor writing and burlesques, there is afforded little of this training.

The distinguishing mark of many of the school papers issued by pupils is flippancy, both in relation to the material presented and the manner of presentation. The aim of those publishing and writing, it appears, is merely amusement, rather than that of making the paper fill a need or serve a purpose for the school as a whole or for the pupils. No serious attempt is made to give a faithful or accurate report of school activities, the things which directly affect the pupils and the things which they are interested in most.

The teacher should see that the school paper gives its readers the essential news events of the school. Much of the news will come from the events already noted as suitable for publication in the community newspapers. Because of the limited circulation, it must be remembered that the interests of the readers are still more centralized, than in the case of the general newspaper. A report of a meeting of a society, for that reason, will give more of the minor details, than for a general newspaper, while an address which practically all of the students have attended, will have little news value for the school paper. For the general newspaper in the community, what the speaker said will be news to a majority of the readers.

The school paper may serve in arousing an interest in a coming lecture or meeting. This should be done by giving in advance as far as possible, or advisable, the character of the speech; some-

thing about the speaker; the purpose of the meetings and many other details. Many such events are unattended because the pupils and others do not know enough about it to decide whether or not they are interested.

Since all of the pupils are known to each other there is an opportunity for many personal items of news. This does not mean, as in the columns of many such papers, that the pupils are to be made the object of attempted witty or joking comment. That is a general practice that should be stopped by the teacher in charge. These news items may refer to a case of illness, a journey, entertainment of friends, breaking an athletic record, or many other similar things.

III.—THE PRESENTATION OF NEWS.

FOR NEWSPAPERS.

Every news or informational article of any length or importance, as a basis for discussion, at least, may be divided thus:

I.—The Lead (Introduction)
II.—The Body.

The Lead.—The general construction of a news story differs from any other sort of writing. That difference, in brief, is this: The climax (the paramount fact or facts; the essential thought of thoughts) is presented at the very beginning. It is not left for the ending or placed in the body of the story. The main motive in writing any matter for publication is that it shall be read. To accomplish this the information must be so arranged that it attracts and holds attention. Such matter placed at the beginning makes the lead to the story.

There can be no reason for confusing this style with the misused term of "sensational". What is commonly thought of as "sensational" is associated with the untruthful and the imaginary. Beginning a news article in such a way that it attracts means that you are to present first those facts or information which you judge to be the most important, interesting or unusual. Construct a story otherwise and you lose the opportunity of gaining the reader's attention at the start. He must search through the article to find the buried meat. Too often he will stop reading after finding nothing in the lead that appeals or interests. An accurate, direct statement of the facts or thoughts of the greatest general interest will attract that desired attention before anything else. Once ob-

tained the careful presentation of other facts or details of less importance will hold it.

Just what material the lead of a story shall contain must be determined by the writer in accordance with the information that he has to present. Any attempt to give specific rules for the writing of a lead would be as futile as an attempt to dictate a style which would fit the writing of all news stories. Before writing, the teacher should analyze all information that he has at hand and consider it from every possible angle. That which he judges to be of the greatest general interest should go into the lead.

The following extract, in part, is an example of a poor presentation of an athletic contest, the work of a teacher:

> Before the boys from ..... school came to meet us on the gridiron yesterday, there was a rousing meeting of the ..... H. S. rooters in the assembly room. Speeches were made by the coach and members of the faculty and the spirit displayed was far beyond that seen here in many years. * * * * * The home team went on the field this afternoon determined to win. They played hard from the start but were at a disadvantage because of weight. * * * * * At the end of the first half the score was 12 to 6 against the home team. In the last half our boys put up a spirited fight. * * * * * When the final whistle blew the home team had lost, the score being 24 to 12. * * * * * *

A careful consideration of the foregoing, which in full was more than a column long, shows that the information the reader desires most is not included in the lead but that he must "wade" through the much less important information to get it. The interesting news feature in this instance was not in the details of the mass meeting, an event incidental to the contest itself. Yet this information is given "the position of honor" while that of vital interest—what team won—is found near the end, almost the last information that the reader gets, in case he has gone that far into the article. Information in news articles are not arranged chronologically but in order of importance. While the mass meeting actually preceded the game, in the story of the two it should come last.

A lead, according to the information given, might have been in this form:

> The ..... H. S. football players lost to their heavier opponents, the ..... school team on ..... field here this afternoon by a score of 24 to 12. The home team made a spirited fight for victory but was able to cross the visitors' goal line only twice. * * * *

Such a lead gives in direct, simple statements the result of the

contest and a reason for the result. It might be followed by the most interesting details of the contest and other facts already suggested. The mass meeting should be told about last, unless alluded to in the story to explain the display of spirit.

Another example of a lead used in the report of a speech is given here:

> At a meeting of women here this morning in the rooms of the Woman's City Club, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, the English suffragist, told of the suffrage movement. She told the members of the club that they were backward. * * * *

This lead contains the important facts but lacks a direct style of handling. Another writer who reported the event, improves it by making his lead tell more, even picturing the speaker as she made the statement. The second lead says:

> Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, the militant young English suffragist, shook her finger at seventy-eight members of the Woman's City Club this morning and told them that they were "backward."
> "I mean just what I say," she said. "The United States * * * * * *."

Attention is called also to the leads which begin: "A meeting was held"; "A party was given"; "The ———Club gave an entertainment", etc. The mere fact that the meeting was held is not the most interesting fact. In most cases advance notices have been printed and it is known that these events are to take place. What the readers want to know first is what happened. The most important happening at any one of these events comes in the lead. For example:

> Prof. John Jones will be invited to speak here. The ..... Club, at a meeting last night in the high school auditorium, instructed its secretary, James Smith, to ask him to give a lecture to the pupils * * * * *

Or, in the case of a party where there seems to be nothing of special significance to pick out for a lead, avoid the monotonous beginning by grouping. Example:

> Forty persons heard a musical program and afterward danced last night at the home * * * * .

There is no definite length for the lead of any news story. It may consist of a single sentence, a paragraph or several paragraphs. The length is judged by the amount of space it requires to give the essential information.

The Body of the Story.—The body of the story will be expected to give, without repetition, the details of the information selected for the lead and additional information of secondary im-

portance. Contrary to general belief the tendency of beginners or inexperienced writers, is to give too few details rather than too many. Their stories, for that reason, often are not complete or satisfying to the readers. The necessity of avoiding repetition of facts is an important one and can easily be avoided.

The additional facts carried in the body of the story should follow, in order of the degree of interest they incite. In the report of a program of speeches, for instance, you may decide that the most important talk is that of the third speaker. Having used this for the lead, you may follow with what the second or the fifth said, etc.

There is no "ending" to a news story as commonly referred to in fiction writing. A news story ends when you have presented all of the facts that are of general interest.

FOR TECHNICAL OR EDUCATIONAL JOURNALS.

Material for an article on educational matters, of interest to teachers alone, is technical "news". Its presentation, to be effective, must be the same as that of the general news story. The same plan is available for constructing the lead. The fact that such articles often deal with theories, problems and investigations, instead of more concrete happenings, does not in the least affect the manner of presentation.

As an illustration, a teacher has spent weeks, months or even longer in research work of a definite character. He has completed that work and desires to give his information to other teachers. He should present at the very beginning (in the lead) the problem investigated and the concrete results. The body of the article should contain every step worthy of note in his work leading up to the final result. The greater interest will be aroused and many more readers will be attracted if, at the start, it tells "what it is all about."

Again take an article dealing with a new method of teaching, which a teacher has devised and found expedient. The lead should tell *what* that method is; *how* it benefits and *why* it benefits. The part of the article which follows (the body) should contain a complete explanation (details of use, application, etc.) so that any teacher might put the method to a practical test. In such cases the body of the article may differ from that of a news story, since there should be a logical order of the various phases of the subject matter.

The following is a news story written by a teacher for a school journal:

> The ..... Association of Mathematics Teachers held its annual meeting in the audience room of the Baptist church, Friday, October 21, at 2 p. m., the President, Mr. .... presiding.
>
> The central thought "what to emphasize and what to eliminate in high school mathematics" was carried out in the program.

Note in the foregoing how the lead is burdened with many unessential details which might well be left out altogether, or written after the important facts are given. The report of the program which follows would indicate that the "central thought" was that pupils should be led to *think*. This was buried deep in the article.

Here is a similar example printed in a school journal:

> At the meeting of the State Teachers' Association held in ..... in October, the legislative committee appointed a year ago made its report to the association. In making its report and recommendation, the committee adopted the very sensible plan of confining its efforts in the next legislature to a few important measures, feeling that these, if enacted, would greatly increase the efficiency of our schools, and more would be accomplished than by attempting any sweeping or radical revision of the school laws at this time. The committee made recommendations on the following subjects. * * * *
>
> We present below the recommendation of the committee on the first and third of these subjects, feeling that these facts * *.

One learns from the foregoing lead that the association met and heard a committee report. If the principal event of the meeting was this report, then the essential news feature would be "what the report said." Trivial details must be read before this point is reached There is lacking, any direct, definite statement of fact in the lead. There is nothing that attracts.

In writing a discussion on the value of teaching agriculture in the public schools, a teacher, in an article for a school journal, first gives a history of the study of scientific farming. This is followed by various matter which showed that the writer had been investigating the subject for some time. At the end of the article he presents the results of that investigation:

> More can be done when the country school has as a part of its plant, a farm of a few acres where the best agricultural ideas shall be executed. The best way to make a boy a good farmer is to have him grow up in the midst of good farming.

The writer apparently was striving for a good "ending". It

is quite probable that the majority of the readers did not pursue the article far enough to enjoy that ending.

In the treatment of all technical subjects, emphasis must be placed on details so that the reader may have no trouble in understanding the matter clearly. Remember that your information is especially beneficial to the younger and less experienced teachers. They will be unable to make use of it unless it is presented to them clearly and explicitly.

FOR SCHOOL PAPERS.

Eliminating the literary publications, the magazines and class annuals, every paper issued by the pupils of a school is primarily a newspaper. The methods suggested for the presentation of any news stories is applicable to school papers.

In the material, in the presentation, and in the writing the pupils often fail to realize any sense of responsibilty. Few realize that any publication may do much harm through the indiscriminate, unthinking methods of using, presenting and writing information. Here the teacher should use a guiding hand.

IV.—WRITING THE NEWS AND TECHNICAL ARTICLE.

Effective writing in presenting information or ideas, consists in constructing concise, attractive, smooth-reading articles; articles that point out definitely facts, conditions, events or thoughts as the writer sees or knows them. There can be no rules to govern any individual article, yet there are general principles governing writing of this nature.

Simplicity.—In grammatical construction and general style, simplicity best serves the purpose. Use short, simple, crisp sentences rather than the long, involved construction. This will give the desired quality—terseness. Use, also, the short, common words where these words will express the exact meaning. Particularly in the writing on technical subjects is there a tendency to use so many technical terms that only a few who have made a study of the same subject will understand. With the simple forms and words your information will reach many it otherwise would not, and will bring greater results.

Most of the technical articles written on educational or other subjects "go over the heads" of the readers. Why should a teacher of agriculture, who has suggestions helpful for a farmer, write in such a way that the average farmer (the very one he de-

sires to reach) cannot understand him? Why should a physician write for the people at large, of the ways to prevent disease, when his technical terms and manner of presentation prevents them from understanding? Why should the teacher who has specialized in educational methods write so that the average teacher cannot understand?

Originality.—Avoid a sameness in expression. An original turn to the lead, or in the writing as a whole, never fails to please. Originality in writing prevents the article from becoming what is known as "dry reading". It includes the omission of trite phrases and expressions, mottoes or proverbs that have been overworked.

Examples:

Brilliant speaker.
Well known.
Large and enthusiastic audience.
Largest crowd ever assembled.
Hardest fought game.
Charming hostess.
Admiring friends.
Breathless silence.
Evening repast.
Fair sex.
Few and far between.
Host of friends.
News leaked out.
Sole topic of conversation.
Leave no stone unturned.

These are only a few of many expressions that are now timeworn. They represent the type of expressions that have been used so constantly and so long that they now pall on the reader.

Compression.—Remember that the space of newspapers and technical journals is limited. Compress your facts as much as possible. Make every word, every sentence tell something, yet keep the meaning clear. This applies both to expression and words. Where one word will do for three or four then use that one word. These may serve as illustrations:

To (or for)—for the purpose of.
Escaped—made his escape.
Burned—destroyed by fire.
About—in the neighborhood of.
Feel—experienced a sensation.
Appeared—put in an appearance.
Went—made his way.

In a similar way writing may be condensed by substituting the short, simple word for the longer equivalent. Thus:

Talk—converse.
Show—demonstrate.
Pay—remunerate.
Live—reside.

Clearness.—No writer can expect to express himself clearly without first having his information or ideas clear in his own mind. Clearness involves the correct use of the English language, words and terms. There can be no excuse for the reader being in doubt as to the author's intended meaning, either through the writer's lack of knowledge of his subject, or inability to express himself clearly.

Naturalness.—Some writers become frightened when they think of seeing their article in print. The result is they strain for effect and their writing becomes stiff and formal. A fact stated simply and naturally is far more effective than any elaborate combination of words or phrases. Write as you would tell it in conversing. If you have some information to tell, in talking, you start with the important and follow with the details, always using the simple expressions—that is natural. If more persons wrote as they talked there would be more readable, and brighter articles.

Use of Direct Discourse.—Often the use of direct discourse is effective in reproducing the thoughts or sayings of others, but the exact words (at least the important words which have any bearing on the meaning) should be used. Where there is any doubt as to these words, use indirect discourse. The essential value of direct discourse is that it gives the speaker's views much more forcefully, hence it is needed only when expressing something quite unusual or important. The use of quotation is commonly used in beginning the report of an interview or speech. There can be no serious objection, if the quotation is accurate, but such a method should be reserved for statements of great importance rather than ordinary ones.

Editorial Comment.—In writing news the writer should present the facts and allow the reader to form his own opinions. There may be included interpretation of the facts, since the writer is supposed to be familiar with conditions, but there is no reason for his personal opinion or comment. The editorial "we" so often used by beginners is no longer found in the news columns. If it is desired to show the general effect of a news event, then there

may be written the opinions in interviews of others, or of those who witnessed it, giving the general impression the event has made—but that is interpretation. For the personal comment of the editors, or contributors, the editorial page is open, or comment may be expressed aside from the news itself, through communications.

The use of comment applies particularly in reports of entertainments, plays, etc. Criticisms should be written only by those who can qualify as an expert. Remember, also, that such terms as: "Young man of sterling qualities", "most pleasing rendition" (and many others) are used generally to flatter.

Articles and discussions on technical subjects, however, may be expected to contain comment. In such writing the chief purpose of the article is instructional and there can be no valid objection to the opinion of the writer who has studied his subject.

Personality of the Writer.—The personal pronoun "I" has been eliminated now from the news columns, unless it is a signed article. The readers are interested in the news, itself, and not you or how you obtained it.

"Coloring of Facts."—No matter how trivial, or harmless it may seem, any use of imagination in supplying facts is dishonorable in writing any informational article. The reader accepts such articles as truthful and accurate presentations of facts.

Extravagant Phrases.—Avoid as far as possible the use of comparisons, figures of speech and a too frequent use of adjectives. They are generally found in the attempts at "fine writing", not in the simple style. Examples:

> The ground was covered with a *white mantle of snow.* (figure of speech).
>
> What might have been one of the most disastrous fires that ever visited * * * . (Extravagant expression)
>
> Beautiful, sweet scented flowers, marvelously transformed the cosy apartments * * * . (Extravagant through the use of adjectives).

Here are examples of adjectives often used, although meaningless because they are trite or unnecessary:

> Sad news of death—news of a death is always sad.
>
> Prominent farmer—indiscriminate use has made the adjective meaningless.
>
> Rising young lawyer—trite.

Generalities.—Writers sometimes make the mistake of expressing themselves in general terms. This results in giving

hazy, indefinite information. Such expressions as "many," "few", "a number of" and "several" should be used sparingly. Other examples of indefinite expressions are:

An old man—give his age.
On Broadway—give number or location on street.
Lives in the country—give direction and miles.
A long distance—give the number of miles.
Eating fruit—tell what fruit.
Tiny lad—give age or size.

Use of Words.—The proper use of words aids in insuring accuracy, clearness and originality. Always use that word which gives the exact meaning desired. Many words possess individual shades of meaning, although they are commonly thought of as synonymous. The following will serve as examples:

Home, house—Home conveys the deeper meaning, that of the life within. House may be properly used when the writer has in mind only the building.

Believe, think—Believe denotes careful study or consideration. Think implies a conclusion without either.

Leave, depart—Leave requires an object. Smith left the city for the East; Smith departed for the East.

Haste, hurry—Haste merely implies speed. Hurry implies speed with attendant confusion.

Many words are used every day incorrectly in newspapers and other publications. Such words show a lack of care on the part of the writer. Examples:

Suspicion—noun only.
Loan—noun only, the verb is lend.

Over—incorrectly used for more than.
Occur—things occur by accident.
Take place—things take place by design.
Dirt—used incorrectly for earth.
Curious—used incorrectly for odd.
Burglarize—not a good word.
Groom—incorrectly used for bridegroom.
Claim—incorrectly used for say or assert.
Awful—rarely conveys the meaning intended.
But—incorrectly used for only.
Party, parties—incorrectly used for person or persons.
Locate—incorrectly used for find.
Given—write: A watch was given to Smith; not Smith was given a watch.
Graduated—write: Smith was graduated; not Smith graduated.
Divine—not a noun.
Grow—incorrectly used for become.
Alleged—incorrectly used for say or assert.
People—incorrectly used for persons.
Secure—incorrectly used for obtain or procure.
During—carries the idea of continuity.
Past—write: last week, not past week.

Preparation of Copy.—Before submitting copy (in newspaper offices and in the offices of most other publications all manuscript is known as copy) the writer should read it over carefully for corrections. Although the copy may be read by copy readers or editors, before it is published, this reading after it is submitted, is done more as a check on the writer and to judge the subject matter. The writer must prepare his copy on the theory that it is to go direct from him to the printer, perfect as to English, punctuation, quotations, etc. Here are a few general rules that should be followed in preparing the copy:

Use the typewriter whenever possible.

Use double or triple space on the typewriter.

Write your name in the upper left-hand corner of the first page. Number each page.

Leave a margin of at least an inch and a half at the left, and begin your story about the middle of the first page.

Write only on one side of the paper.

Indent for paragraph half the width of the page.

Never divide a word from one page to another. Avoid dividing a word.

Do not write over figures or words. Scratch out and rewrite.

Do not fasten sheets of copy together.

Be particularly careful, if obliged to write long-hand copy. Underscore *u* and overscore *n* when there is any chance of confusion. Likewise, underscore *a* and overscore *o*. Print proper names and unusual words.

When pages are inserted, use letters. For example, between pages 3 and 4 number the inserted pages 3a, 3b, etc.

A circle drawn around an abbreviation indicates the word is to be spelled out. A circle around a spelled-out word indicates it is to be abbreviated.

Use an "end-mark" to indicate your story is completed. A cross made of parallel lines may be used.

When there is any chance that a word intentionally misspelled, as in dialect, will be changed by the printer, draw a circle around the word, run a line to the margin and there write "Follow Copy." This will show that the copy is not to be changed.

English.—That style of writing sometimes referred to as "newspaper English" is fast disappearing from the progressive, well-edited newspapers. Express yourself in plain English and avoid the set forms. Unfortunately, through a similarity in the character of the news presented from day to day, there are still in use in some papers stereotyped, hackneyed expressions. They are barred from the better class of papers. Some examples, most of which would come under the head of trite, are given here:

A rumor has it that the *minions of the law will put in their appearnace : :*
The *scene beggared description* when the *rising young barrister, white as a sheet,* arose : : : : : :.
The flames *spred like wildfire* and the *unfortunate victims* in the *wildest of excitement : : : :*

Details of Style.—No uniform rules regarding details are used by all newspapers and periodicals. These rules, however, are taken from the "style books" of the best edited newspapers and may be safely followed:

CAPITALIZATION.

Capitalize:

Names of associations, societies, clubs, companies, etc., as Glee Club, Odd Fellows, Payne-Roth Grocery Company, National Association of Advertising Managers, Columbia Club.

University, college, academy, etc., when part of a title, as University of Missouri, Central College. When not connected with a name use lower-case, except in reference to the University of Missouri, which is to be distinguished as the University.

Building, hall, house, hotel, etc., when used with a distinguishing name, as Athens Hotel, Nowell Building, Columbia Theater.

Names of all political parties, as Democratic, Republican, Socialist.

Principal words in titles of books, plays, addresses.

Titles when preceding the name, as President Hill, Doctor Jones. But use lower-case when the title follows the name, as Doctor Hill, president of the University.

Distinguishing name only referring to wards, streets, avenues, railroad stations, mines, etc., as North Ninth street. Third ward, Wabash station, Yellow Dog mine.

Specific names of courts of record, as Boone County Circuit Court, Kansas City Court of Appeals, Missouri Supreme Court, but use lower-case when qualifying name is not given, as the circuit court, the supreme court.

Holidays, as Fourth of July, Columbus Day.

Sections of the United States, as the North, the West, the Middle West, North Atlantic States.

Nicknames of states and cities, as the Buckeye State, the Hub (Boston).

Names of all races and nationalities except the negro, as Italian, American, Indian.

The name of a bill, act, amendment, etc., as Good Roads Bill, Eleventh Amendment.

All names and pronouns referring to the Deity.

Such names as First Regiment, Company B, National Guard, Grand Army of the Republic, Missouri State Militia.

President when referring to the President of the United States, and titles of all national cabinet officers, but do not capitalize city councilman, chief of police, sheriff, etc., unless they are used before the name.

Nation, Union, Republic, Federal, National, etc., in reference to the United States.

North Pole, South Pole, South Sea Islands, Cape Hatteras, Hudson Bay, Mississippi River, and all such words when they are used as a specific name.

The names of such notable events and things as the Declaration of In-

dependence, the War of 1812, the Revolution, the Government (referring to the United States), the Spanish-American War, the Reformation, the Civil War, the Confederate States.

Bible and words that refer to it, as the Book of Books, the Scriptures.

Congress, House of Representatives, Senate, Assembly, but use lowercase when title is not official, as lower house, legislature, both houses.

King and all titles of nobility referring to specific persons, as King of England, Duke of Wellington.

Such terms as Stars and Stripes, Old Glory, Union Jack, White House.

The names of all religious denominations, as Baptist, Quaker, Mormon, Methodist.

Distinctive names of localities in cities, as West End, Happy Hollow, Back Bay (Boston), etc.

Church, when used in a specific name, as the First Baptist Church.

Do Not Capitalize:

Name of seasons.

Degrees when they are spelled out, as bachelor of arts.

Points of the compass, as north, south.

Postoffice, courthouse, poorhouse, council chamber, city hall, armory, president's house, navy, army, cadets, fraternity (as Phi Delta Theta fraternity), justice's court, police court, women's parlors.

Professor, unless preceding a name.

Club, society, company, etc., when not used with a specific name.

Senior, junior, sophomore, freshman. (And remember the adjective form of freshman is freshman, not freshmen.)

PUNCTUATION.

Do no use period after per cent.

Run lists of officers thus: President, John Jones; vice-president, Henry Smith; treasurer, John Brown.

In lists of names and addresses use this style: John Jones of Kansas City, A. W. Brown of Mexico, Mo., and Fred Smith of Scranton, Pa. Where more than three names are given, drop "of" before name of city, thus:

John Jones, Kansas City; A. W. Brown, Mexico, Mo.; Fred Smith, Scranton, Pa.

Use no comma in 5 feet 8 inches tall, 3 years 6 months old, etc.

Give scores thus: Missouri 8, Kansas 5.

In summary of athletic events use this style:

100-yard dash—Smith first; Jones, second; Brown, third. Time, 0:10 1-5.

Do not use comma before the conjunction "and" in a series, such as Fred, James and Henry.

Use colon before a quotation of more than one sentence and always when quoted matter begins a new paragraph. Use colon before a series introduced by "as follows," "thus."

QUOTATION.

Quote titles of books, plays, paintings, operas, songs, lectures, sermons, etc. Be sure to include "the" in the quotation if it is a part of the title, as "The Scarlet Letter."

Do not quote names of newspapers and periodicals.

Do not quote extracts that are indented or set in smaller type than the context.

Do not quote the names of balloons, cars, steamships, horses, dogs.
Do not quote the names of characters in plays or books.

FIGURES.

Use figures in giving ages. as 17 years old.

Use figures for sums of money, as $3.87, unless an indefinite sum is mentioned, as a dollar, about five hundred dollars.

Use figures for all athletic records, as a pole vault of 10 feet 2 inches.

Use figures in all matter of a statistical or tabular nature.

Use figures in giving time by the clock, as 10 o'clock, 10 a. m.

Use figures for street numbers, as 10 West Broadway.

Use figures for dimensions, votes, per cents, calibers, dates, degrees of temperature, betting odds and bond terms.

In all other news matter spell out definite numbers up to 100; beyond that use figures. Exception—When a number of two figures occurs in proximity to one of three or more, both shall be put in figures, as 60 women and 741 men.

Spell out all approximate numbers, as nearly a thousand, a dozen, three or four hundred, half a million.

ABBREVIATION.

Abbreviate Sr., and Jr., following names. Write thus: John Smith, Jr.

Abbreviate names of states when used after name of town or city, as Columbia, Mo. Observe this style: Kas., S. D., Ok., Cal., Colo., Ariz., N. D., Pa., Neb., Wash., Mont., Wyo., Ind., Ia., Ore., Tex. Do not abbreviate in Fort Worth), mount (as in Mount Vernon).
Maine, Ohio, Idaho, Utah, Alaska.

When used before the full name abbreviate Dr., Prof., the Rev., as Dr. J. C. Jones, Prof. W. A. Smith. Spell out when used before the surname only, as Doctor Jones, Professor Smith.

Always use "the" before the title Rev., as the Rev. William Brown; if surname only is used, make it the Reverend Mr. Brown. Usually it is sufficient, after the full form has once been used in the story, to say Mr. Brown.

Always spell out per cent, street, avenue, railway, brothers, fort (as

Spell out names of the months, except in date lines. Always spell out names of the days.

Never abbreviate proper names, as Jno., Geo., etc.

Spell out military titles, as colonel, lieutenant, general.

Abbreviate Mr. and Mrs., Mme., Mlle.

Spell out names of the political parties, except in giving election returns.

Spell out governor, superintendent, president.

Use this style in referring to a company: The James Smith Baking Company, or James Smith & Co., bakers. In railway use long "and," as Chicago and Alton.

Abbreviate the word "number" when followed by numerals, as No. 10.

Class of '04 may be used for class of 1904.

Never use "Xmas" for Christmas.

Use Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., not Young Men's Christian Association and Young Women's Christian Association.

Spell out United States, except when it occurs as part of title in navy

or army, as Lieutenant James S. Smith, U. S. A., or Lieutenant James Smith, U. S. N.

Do not abbreviate names of cities, as St. Joe for St. Joseph.

TITLES.

Do not use Mr. when initials or Christian name are given. The second time the man is mentioned in your story use Mr., unless he has another title, such as doctor, professor.

Do not use Master in referring to a boy.

Do not use Esq. following a man's name.

Do not use Honorable, unless it is a title bestowed by Great Britain.

When a person has more than one title use that of the highest rank, as Dr. James Smith, rather than Prof. James Smith. If he has (rightfully) two titles, as Judge and Colonel, use the one last acquired or the one more commonly used by his friends.

Write James Smith and Mrs. Smith or Mr. and Mrs. James Smith, not James Smith and wife.

Do not write the Rev. James Smith, D. D., or Dr. James Smith, M. D.

Use Mrs. before the name of a married woman; Miss before the name of an unmarried woman. In giving a list of married women it is permissible to precede it with Mesdames; Misses before list of unmarried women, always using Christian names or initials.

THE POSSESSIVE CASE.

To form the possessive case of a proper noun ending in s, add an apostrophe and s, as James's book.

To form the possessive of a plural noun already ending in s, add only the apostrophe, as soldiers' rifles.

Never use an apostrophe before the s in ours, yours, hers, its or theirs.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Never begin a sentence with figures. Spell out, or recast the sentence.

Say 40 years old, not aged 40 years.

Say former Judge, not ex-Judge.

Write dates thus: December 23, not December 23rd.

Omit the name of the state after large cities, as New York, Chicago, Boston, Kansas City, St. Louis, Denver.

Do not use a long, cumbersome title preceding a name; put it after the name, as John Smith, keeper of the seal.

Do not make a title of a person's profession or occupation. Say Smith, a barber, not Barber Smith.

Do not use foreign words or phrases when English will do as well. "A dollar a day" is better than a "a dollar per diem."

Don't spell forward, backward, and similar words with a final s.

Don't use the word lady for woman, or gentleman for man.

Use foregoing instead of above as an adjective; as the foregoing statement.

Use this style in giving time: At 5 o'clock yesterday afternoon; putting the hour before the day.

Don't forget to end quoted matter with quotation marks.

Don't overwork "on" before names of days, as on Wednesday, on tomorrow.

Don't overwork "for" in phrases such as for three days, for six years.

Study Newspapers.—By studying the news stories and other articles printed in the well-edited newspapers the teacher can gain many ideas both as to the way material is presented and the writing. A careful selection of newspapers should be made however, for there are poorly written newspapers, just as there are poorly written books.

Writing of Headlines.—In submitting copy to newspapers or technical journals, it is not necessary for the author to write the headlines. Each publication has its own style of headlines for use on articles, varying in respect to their importance, length and position

The teacher, however, who is directing the publication of a school paper, may have to select styles of headlines for that paper and write them. Headline type is always larger or blacker than the type in which the article itself is printed. The teacher should consult the printer and make the selection of the size and style in which the type is to be set. There are presented here three styles of headlines that might be suitable for a school paper:

23 to 25 units.

12 to 15 words.

No. 1

FIFTEEN LECTURE AT ONCE

Program So Full That Visitors Cannot Attend All Numbers—Opportunity for Specialization.

26 units the limit.

35 units in top line. 8 to 10 words.

No. 2

MAY PAVE UNIVERSITY AVE

Resolutions for Improvement Are Passed by City Council.

34 units. the limit.

No. 3

Knights of Columbus Meet.

It can be seen readily from the foregoing that the writing of all headlines must conform to typographical rules. The writer must know how many letters and spaces (units) will go in each

line used. In the mechanical writing these rules should be followed:

> Count spaces as well as letters. Each letter counts one unit, except I, which is one-half, and M and W, which are one and one-half each.
>
> Never divide a word in the top deck of a head, nor in any other line set in caps.
>
> Capitalize all nouns, pronouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives and interjections
>
> Capitalize all words of four or more letters.
>
> Capitalize all forms of the verb to be, as was, is, am.
>
> Capitalize both parts of compound words.
>
> Capitalize a preposition when it is attached to the verb, as in the sentence: He was Voted For by His Party.

Headlines are not used merely to separate the various stories on a printed page. They are designed: (1) to attract; (2) to tell what the story that follows is about. Just as in writing a lead, the writer should put into the heading the essential news fact or facts. There should be no mention of anything that is not contained in the story itself, and there should not be editorial comment.